

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: COMMUNITY COLLEGE

DATE: SEPTEMBER 4, 2008

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS CHAMPAGNE
STEC
TESSIER
SIMMES

COMMITTEE MEMBER ABSENT:

SUPERVISOR TAYLOR

OTHERS PRESENT:**REPRESENTING ADIRONDACK COMMUNITY COLLEGE:**

DR. RONALD HEACOCK, PRESIDENT
WILLIAM LONG, VICE PRESIDENT FOR ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES
PAUL MAZUR, VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC & STUDENT
AFFAIRS

BETSY RABIDA, DIRECTOR OF FINANCIAL SERVICES

JOSEPH CUTSHALL-KING, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/SECRETARY, ACC
FOUNDATION

FREDERIC MONROE, CHAIRMAN

HAL PAYNE, COMMISSIONER OF ADMINISTRATIVE & FISCAL SERVICES

JOANN MCKINSTRY, DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OF ADMINISTRATIVE &
FISCAL SERVICES

JOAN SADY, CLERK, BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

KEVIN GERAGHTY, WARREN COUNTY BUDGET OFFICER

REPRESENTING WASHINGTON COUNTY:**MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

ROBERT BANKS

ROBERT HENKE

JOHN LAPOINTE

JAMES LINDSAY

JOANN TRINKLE

DONALD WILBUR

ROGER WICKES, COUNTY ATTORNEY

KEVIN HAYES, ADMINISTRATOR

DAVID CEDERSTROM, *THE CHRONICLE*

AMANDA ALLEN, SR. LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST

The joint meeting of Warren and Washington Counties Community College Committees was called to order at 9:00 a.m.

Subsequent to introductions, Ronald Heacock, Adirondack Community College (ACC) President, announced that the reason for the joint Committee meeting was to discuss the proposed 2008-2009 ACC Operating Budget which had been defeated by the Washington County Board of Supervisors. He advised that he had been in contact with SUNY (State University of New York) representatives who had advised that, as per the recent ruling in the Westchester County case regarding how budgets needed to be treated, the Washington County Board of Supervisors had been well within their rights to revoke the proposed budget in the interest of reducing their contribution, so long as the overall budget total was not amended.

Roger Wickes, Washington County Attorney, apprised that the Westchester County case had dealt with the ability to direct line item appropriations within the Budget, which did not apply in this case. He said that it was not the intent of the Washington County Board of Supervisors to redirect funds, but rather to reduce the amount that they would be contributing to the Budget. Mr. Wickes stated that upon reviewing the regulations pertaining to such matters, it had been his suggestion that the entire Budget be refused by Washington County if they were unhappy

with the 5% increase included therein. He said he had further advised that revised Budgets would continue to be presented for approval until an increase acceptable to the Board was reached.

Dr. Heacock noted that he had reviewed the minutes from the Washington County Board meeting during which the Budget was rejected and was aware of the extensive discussion held on the matter. He said that in his discussions with SUNY representatives, he had discovered that their group met every other month and their next meeting was scheduled for September 19th. He said that it was imperative that action be taken by the Counties to approve the revised Budget because if the 2008-2009 ACC Operating Budget was not approved by SUNY at their September meeting, it could not be approved until their November meeting, meaning that no State-aid or charge-back income could be generated until the Budget was approved. If this occurred, Dr. Heacock said that ACC would be forced to borrow the funds necessary to support the College's operating costs; however, he noted, SUNY representatives had asserted that if the Counties would guarantee that the proposed Budget would be approved at their September 19th Board meetings, SUNY would approve it at their September meeting as well.

Based upon his reading of the minutes from the prior Washington County Board meeting, Dr. Heacock stated that it was his understanding that the Washington County Board members were agreeable to a 3% increase; therefore, he said, the proposed 2008-2009 ACC Operating Budget had been revised to decrease the amounts received from Warren and Washington Counties to 3%, with the difference being appropriated from the Fund Balance to maintain the total Budget amount. He said that they wished to retain the previously determined Local Share because if it were altered, the charge-back amount acquired from Saratoga County for residents attending the College would be decreased and would cause many issues. Dr. Heacock stated that cuts from State funding were also incurred in the amount of \$10,000 - \$12,000, and related figures in the Budget proposal had been changed in accordance, specifically in the areas of Rentals and in the Child Care Grant funding.

Dr. Heacock stated that in light of the fact that SUNY would not approve the Budget without the consent of the two Counties and because they were unable to draw funding without SUNY approval, action was required regarding the matter in order to keep ACC in operation without borrowing funds from another source.

Subsequent to discussion on the matter, it was the consensus of the members of the Washington County Community College Committee that although no definitive decision could be made without the vote of the full Board, it was their feeling that there would be no opposition to the 3% Budget increase. Mr. Champagne stated that there would be no opposition from the Warren County Board of Supervisors as they had previously approved a 5% Budget increase, which was now being reduced.

Mr. Champagne questioned if a second public hearing would be necessary prior to approving the revised ACC Budget in light of the fact that the figures included therein had changed. Chairman Monroe said that a decision would have to be made as to whether or not the changes were substantive as the total of the budget had not changed, but rather the amounts appropriated from each County, which had actually been lowered. Based on these factors, he said, it might be determined that the changes were immaterial and not requiring a second public hearing; however, he noted, this would be a matter to be determined by the Attorneys for each County.

Motion was made by Mr. Tessier, seconded by Mr. Stec and carried unanimously to approve the revised 2008-2009 ACC Operating Budget with a Warren County appropriation of \$1,663,827 and the necessary resolution was authorized for the September 19th Board meeting. *A copy of the Budget is on file with the minutes.*

Identical action was taken by the members of the Washington County Community College Committee.

Dr. Heacock stated that although he understood the financial obligations and issues facing the Counties, he proposed that continuing discussions be held with the joint Committees to determine what their realistic future financial contributions to the College would be in order to make decisions for its future operation. He said that in reviewing prior budgets and the history of ACC, the local share and increases therein would not support the College at its current stature. Dr. Heacock stated that a large amount of funding was being withdrawn from the ACC Fund Balance in order to meet the Budget for the 2008-2009 year, a concession that could only be made for one more year before extensive layoffs and cutbacks would be required. He said that they had managed to balance the ACC Budget in prior years through layoff and cutback measures as they were unable to reduce salary increases due to the existence of union contracts which required them. Dr. Heacock noted that both Warren and Washington Counties were involved in the approval process for the employee contracts and he asked the Committee members to consider the affect of the contracts on the budget when approving them as salaries comprised approximately 75% of budget costs. He concluded that a joint decision had to be made by all parties with respect to what the Counties could realistically afford because if they were not able to contribute, efforts would have to be made to downsize as they would not be able to sustain the current operations of the College.

Mr. Champagne suggested the development of a plan for the next year to determine necessary funding for the College and to minimize increases to the budget while maintaining reasonable services. Dr. Heacock agreed and stated that he felt they needed to do a better job of presenting the needs of the College now and for the future. He said that they could develop a three-year plan that would outline the desired goals of ACC, as well as different options and avenues to reach those goals. He added that he appreciated the efforts of those Supervisors that had supported the initial request for a 5% budget increase, as well as those who had voted against it in the best interest of the taxpayers.

Subsequent to further discussion on the matter, it was the consensus of both Committees that more frequent meetings should be held between ACC representatives and both Counties to appropriately discuss and plan for future funding.

The joint meeting of Warren and Washington Counties Community College Committees was adjourned at 12:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Amanda Allen, Sr. Legislative Office Specialist